

Message Text

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20

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-08 RSR-01

/181 W

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R 210905 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2391

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KAMPALA 1407

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR ECON UG CA

SUBJECT: AMIN REITERATES PLAN TO ATTEND COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE,
DENIES THERE IS SHORTAGE OF GOODS

1. APRIL 21 VOICE OF UGANDA DREW SOME SMILES WITH LEAD
STORY HEADLINED: " THERE' S NO ' SHORTAGE OF GOODS'."
PRESIDENT AMIN REPORTEDLY TOLD RADFORD, VISITING CORRESPONDENT
OF TORONTO STAR, THAT THERE IS NO SERIOUS SHORTAGE OF
GOODS IN UGANDA. BUT HE WENT ON TO CONTRADICT HIMSELF BY
STATING THAT WHEN HE DECLARED ECONOMIC WAR HE TOLD UGANDANS
TO BE PREPARED TO " SUFFER" FOR ONE OR TWO YEARS. IN ANY CASE,
HE CONTINUED, ANY SHORTAGES WHICH OCCUR " WILL TEACH US TO
RE- ORGANIZE FASTER." PEOPLE LEARN FROM THEIR MISTAKES, HE ADDED.
AMIN REITERATED PROMISE TO PAY COMPENSATION FOR TAKEN- OVER
ASSETS, BUT ALSO REPEATED THERE WOULD BE NO COMPENSATION FOR
BRITISH FARMS.

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2. ACCORDING VOICE ACCOUNT REPORTER ASKED AMIN'S ADVICE TO CANADA, " WHOSE ECONOMY IS CONTROLLED BY AMERICANS." GENERAL SAID THIS WAS INTERNAL MATTER FOR CANADA, BUT SHOULD CANADIANS DECIDE TO CONTROL THEIR OWN ECONOMY THEY WILL HAVE HIS ONE HUNDRED PER CENT SUPPORT. GENERAL SAID HE LOVES CANADIAN PEOPLE AND WAS " SORRY AND SURPRISED" THAT CANADA WAS PRESSURED BY BRITAIN TO WITHDRAW ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO UGANDA BECAUSE OF ASIAN EXPULSION. HE SAID CANADA SHOULD HAVE SUPPORTED HIS EXPULSION ACTION. AMIN SAID HE HAD ALREADY ACCEPTED INVITATION TO ATTEND COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE IN OTTAWA. ASKED WHAT SECURITY HE WOULD NEED IN CANADA, AMIN REPLIED THIS WAS RESPONSIBILITY OF HOST GOVERNMENT.

3. MEANWHILE BOTH VOICE AND THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN CARRYING WIDE RANGE OF STORIES, LETTERS, INTERVIEWS WHICH GIVE LIE TO PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ABOUT NO SHORTAGES. GET- RICH- QUICK UGANDAN TRADERS ARE BLAMED, HOARDING OF GOODS IS CHARGED, OVERCHARGING AND DISTRIBUTION FAILURES NOTED, VIOLATIONS OF PRICE CONTROL LAWS ARE MENTIONED, AND ONE RESPONDENT EVEN SUGGESTED STATE TRADING CORPORATION BE ABOLISHED FOR ITS SINS.

4. COMMENT: NO ONE, OF COURSE, DARES BLAME AMIN'S " ECONOMIC WAR" FOR OBVIOUSLY SERIOUS SHORTAGES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES SUCH AS RICE, SUGAR, SALT AND EDIBLE OIL. GOU APPARENTLY THINKS IT CAN REPEAL LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND. GOU ALSO SEEMS AS CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT DIPLOMATS REPORT AS ABOUT WHAT THEY EAT. THREE DAYS AGO ALL DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS RECEIVED CALLS FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT IF THEY WOULD GO TO A CERTAIN GROCERY AFTER FIVE THAT DAY THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO BUY " ANYTHING THEY WANT" (MEANING RICE, SALT, SUGAR AND EDIBLE OIL). THIS TURNED OUT TO BE ONLY A HALF- TRUTH, BUT SEEMED DESIGNED TO COUNTER COMPLAINTS BY DIPLOMATS THAT ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ARE VERY HARD TO FIND THESE DAYS.
KEELEY

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